

dialogue

The Staff Newsletter of the Ministry of Community and Social Services

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MCSS re-organizes

by Julia Naczynski

June 30th will be a critical date in this year of re-organization. That is the target date for a new design for the structure of MCSS. Four task forces have been given the job of coming up with a new design.

Watch for more news in coming monthly issues of *Dialogue*. See "Task force updates" on page 3.

An April 8th message from Deputy Minister Rosemary Proctor gave details about the purpose of the task forces and their two sub-groups as well as the names of the task force chairs and task force members. To re-cap, the task forces and their chairs are: Human Resources, Mary Kardos Burton; Policy, Judith Wright; Corporate Services, Lynn MacDonald; Operations, Margaret Gallow. Sharing the work of the Operations Task Force are the Developmental Services Sub-Group (chair, John Hewitt) and Program and Management Support Sub-Group (chair, Ernie Nelson).

The task forces report to the deputy minister. Lynne Bullard is executive lead for this restructuring project and Christine Macartney is project director.

More than 50 MCSS employees — ranging from program supervisors, a vocational rehabilitation counsellor and parental support workers to financial analysts and regional managers — have volunteered to work on the four task groups and two sub-groups. They were selected from more than 200 who applied, and have committed to work at least one day a week on their teams, in addition to their regular duties.

Assisting the task forces is a restructuring project team, whose job is to support and bring the work of the task forces and sub-groups together and coordinate it so that the final result is an integrated implementation plan for re-organization.

(See "Task force updates" for the names of project team members.)

Orientation meetings for the task force members took place April 19th and 21st.

As announced by the deputy minister on March 15th, one outcome of the restructuring will be the phasing-out of the regional offices in London (Southwest), Toronto (Central), Kingston (Southeast) and Sault Ste. Marie (North) by March 31,

1994. Functions will be repositioned as necessary, and staff will be redeployed where possible.

Other outcomes of the project include:

- the design of a structure within Operations Division for Developmental Services;
- the design of a structure within Operations Division to provide program and management support;
- a design to achieve consistency, efficiency and accountability in delivery of corporate services;
- a design which will position all policy activities appropriately across the organization;
- a human resource plan to accommodate the structural changes to the ministry.

And finally, in July, there will be a structural design and implementation plan that integrates all of these outcomes.

Dialogue will keep you updated on the progress of the project, and e-mail messages from the deputy minister and others will be sent out as needed.

More news, more often: your new *Dialogue*

We hope you like the new look and size of *Dialogue*.

We have changed *Dialogue* so that it can be published more often, which means getting news about the ministry to you more quickly.

Dialogue will now be published 10 times a year — we'll combine the July/August and November/December issues.

And, we've changed the format so that it costs less to produce — on recycled paper again, of course.

One thing that hasn't changed is that we still want your story ideas, photos and other submissions. Don't forget you can still contact us at the Communications and Marketing Branch at Hepburn Block, and the editor by government mail or e-mail (see page 4 box).

So, let us know what you think!
— Julia Naczynski, Editor



A message from the Deputy Minister

A couple of months ago, I announced a significant re-structuring of the Ministry of Community and Social Services. Since then, a lot of work has taken place as we move toward our June 30th deadline for a new organization.

I hope this edition's article on the various re-structuring task forces will give you a better understanding of the work that is being done to put in place the new organization.

It is important that you understand the process we are using because this is your opportunity to give your suggestions about the re-structuring project. If you do want to share your thoughts, I encourage you to do it now. In the coming weeks we will be making decisions that will affect the ministry for years to come. We need your advice to make the best decisions possible.

There are a number of ways you can give your advice or ask questions.

If there is a task force member close to where you work, ask him or her to take your thoughts back to the other task force members. A message listing all task force

members was sent out on April 8th.

If you have access to electronic mail, send your message to "RESTRUC_PROJECT". This e-mail address has been set up specifically to receive questions and suggestions about the re-structuring project. Staff of the project will monitor incoming messages daily, forward your suggestion to the appropriate task force and/or respond to your questions as quickly as possible.

Finally, you can call (416) 325-5320 (this is a government telephone line so you can call free of charge from any ministry location). You will hear a recorded message when you call and then you'll be asked to leave your questions or suggestions. Again, the project team will be monitoring those calls and following up on your calls as quickly as possible.

Using the methods outlined, you have an opportunity to give us your advice as we plan these organizational changes for our ministry.



Rosemary Proctor

Tony Silipo: Profiling the priorities

by Julia Naczynski

"I think that in these very difficult times, it's crucial that we structure our decision-making processes in a way that really reaches out and relies on the expertise that's out there," says Tony Silipo as he settles back in his chair.

Since February, Tony has been settling into his role as Minister of Community and Social Services. Prior to this appointment, he was Minister of Education.

"There are many people out there who want to be involved in a very significant way in the decisions that we make," says Tony. "And I think they understand the kind of fiscal situation that we're in. The way decisions should be made is by involving the people that are affected."

One example is the establishment of the Council of Consumers, an advisory group of people who have or are receiving social assistance and who will be actively assisting in decisions affecting social assistance reform. Much of this kind of work had been going on with his predecessor, Marion Boyd, particularly the child care consultations, Council of Consumers and long-term care reform, Tony notes.

"One of the things I hope to bring to all of this work is a practical sense of what can be achieved," says Tony. "I believe in a sense of vision of what the future should look like, but I also believe very much in incremental change."

"We need to have some concrete improvements that we can point to over the short-term — the short-term being the next year or two years."

"There are a lot of good people who work in this ministry and I think there's a willingness to really roll up our sleeves and really do a lot of work along those lines."

Of course, the topic on everyone's minds right now is the ministry re-organization.

"Because of the sheer magnitude of the fiscal problems we have, we need to look at how the ministry functions and how it's organized," says Tony frankly.

"What I would say to people who might have apprehensions about what is happening is, we will do our best to respect people as employees and respect the value of the work that they do," says Tony. "People will be able to look at the re-organization and see that the decisions will be made in the fairest way that we can make them."

"We will have to look at the structures that we need to do the job, and then equally look at the impact that those changes have on individuals."

Tony says he has two clear public policy priorities. First is social assistance reform and "how we can set up, over a period of time, a social assistance system that has as its primary focus the issue of assisting people right from the beginning to get re-oriented back toward the workforce," says Tony. He also notes that it is an often-forgotten statistic that 40 per cent of the people who rely on social assistance are children.

The second priority is child care reform. "We need to continue to heighten our work on reforming the system and developing the system of services that we have out there into a system that deals with the issues of funding that we can provide — AND that deals with the links that have to be clarified between child care and education in the early years."

"It's not just the matter of child care — it's what is the most effective way of providing good care and education to young children?"

"A lot of good work has been done and I'll be interested in moving that along."



Minister Tony Silipo gestures as he speaks at the first gathering of the newly-formed Council of Consumers.

Photo by Bruce Pelletier

Tony Silipo: a 60-second resumé

• Last name pronounced "See-LEEP-o."

• Born in Italy, emigrated with family to Australia in 1967 at age 9, to Canada at age 12.

• First public office: NDP trustee to the City of Toronto Board of Education at age 21 in 1978, during his third year of university. Was a trustee for 12 years,

the last two as chair of the board.

• Attended York University's Osgoode Hall Law School; later set up a law practice.

• Represents Dovercourt, a downtown Toronto riding.

• Married to Anne-Marie Miraglia; they have a son, Adriano, age almost 5.

Amethyst Award deadline is June 1st

by Julia Naczynski

You can still nominate an OPS colleague or team of colleagues for an Amethyst Award if you hurry.

Nominations can be made — by June 1st — for excellence in client service, innovation, valuing people or professional achievement. The forms (with distinctive purple type) were distributed with the March 25th paycheque envelopes, but if you can't find one, call the Amethyst Award people (Citizenship) at 416-314-7526.

Don't forget that besides your own letter of nomination you'll need a letter of support from two other people.

MCSS is actively promoting these first-ever provincial awards and we have three regional co-ordinators and 16 coaches or "champions" beating the drums to encourage nominations.

Rideau Regional Centre champion Denise Miall and her coaches, Jean Vandusen and Susan Jackson, declared March 25th Purple Day and have been promoting the awards with purple balloons, purple buttons and daily e-mail reminders as well as speaking at staff meetings. "After all, what we do in our jobs helps make Ontario a great place to live," Denise says. She figures they'll have at least 10 nominations.

In Kitchener-Waterloo, the champions/coaches have been busy.

Champion Susan Blackwell, who's in Guelph, planned a noon-hour "subway sandwich and refreshment" lunch — for \$5, participants got a lunch that included dessert and this "captive

audience" was entertained with a video about the Amethyst Awards.

At Palmerston's Midwestern Regional Centre, Brenda Pfeffer and John Hollingsworth tempted staff to their video presentation with a door prize and cookies with purple icing. Owen Sound's Sandra

Richardson is luring them in with home-baked goodies, and Brigitte Zeiger in Waterloo is doing at least 10 presentations at meetings — plus special coffee break events in case there are people who "don't do meetings" — to promote nominations.



Photo by Judy Edwards

Rideau Regional Centre administrator Wynn Turner, Amethyst coach Jean Vandusen and Amethyst champion Maria Collins get into the purple balloons in a big way to promote nominations to the Amethyst Awards.

A reunion at HRC

Over the past decade, about 300 residents have left Huronia Regional Centre in Orillia to live in the community. The recently-formed Huronia Regional Centre Alumni Committee is looking for former residents and clients who might like to attend a special reunion on August 7 from 1 to 5 p.m. at "The Meeting Place" in Room 121, Boardroom B of the HRC Administration Building. For more information, call Claire Burridge at HRC at 705-326-7361.

People on the move

Alfred Carr joins the ministry as the director of Financial and Capital Planning Branch, Corporate Service Division, effective May 10. Alfred joins us from the Ministry of Finance (Revenue). Dennis Norton, who has been acting director during the division's period of transition, resumes his position as manager of Financial and Capital Planning Branch.

Task Force Updates

Working towards a new ministry organization requires consideration of a number of processes and structures. That includes specific work on several activities. The work is being led by the various task forces. The activities and the task force member assigned to coordinate them are listed below. Feel free to get in touch with any of the people mentioned below.

Operations Task Force

The Operations Task Force is chaired by Margaret Gallow, Acting Assistant Deputy Minister of Operations. Because of the size and complexity of the division, there is a large number of individual activities underway.

Ron Murray, who is a member of the Restructuring Project Team, is coordinating two activities. The first is a functional analysis of the Operations Division. This will analyze the major functions carried out by people who work in the division. Secondly, Ron is responsible for a project that will recommend the design of the office of the Assistant Deputy Minister of Operations.

Kingston Area Manager Ernie Nelson is leading work that will define the kinds of work processes and organizational structures that are required to support the Operations Division's main job of managing and delivering programs.

Pierre Lalonde, Ottawa Area Manager, is working on the definition of the decision-making processes and necessary structures within the division.

Toronto Area Manager Barb Saunders is doing work that will identify the impact of the re-structuring on area offices and recommend any necessary changes at that level.

From the Operational Coordination Branch, Jean MacDonald is leading work that will recommend the appropriate reporting relationship for a number of activities that are currently located in Operational Coordination. These include Adoption Services, the Child Abuse Register, Crown Ward Review, the Child and Family Services Review Board, the Custody Review Board, the Soldiers' Aid Commission, and the Investigations Unit.

Acting Central Region Director Lynne Bullard is coordinating work that will recommend the reporting relationships of the ministry's directly-operated children's facilities.

Oxford Regional Centre Administrator John Hewitt is leading work to provide advice on the structure and processes of



Meet the Restructuring Project Team members who are co-ordinating the work of the re-organization task forces. Their names (and where they're from, or title) are (front, seated) Karen Robson, administrative assistant; Lynn Bullard, executive lead from Central Regional Office. Behind them are (from left to right), Peter Burbridge, Kingston Area Office (AO); Marion Morley, Information Systems Branch; Roo Koropati, Mississauga AO; Christine Macortney, project director from Operational Co-ordination; Ron Murray, Central Regional Office; Dawn Wintermeyer, Strategic Directions; Barbara Kane, Children's Services Branch; Lorraine Young, Mississauga AO; and Sheila Thacker, administrative support. Not seen in the photo are Casey Reedy, Southwest Regional Office; Cheryl O'Connor, Southeast Regional Office; Susan Bihun, Ottawa AO; and Suzanne Hamilton, Children's Services Branch.

the new Developmental Services Branch, which will be located in the Operations Division.

Finally, Susan Reid of Strategic Directions will coordinate work that will examine so-called "horizontal relationships". In other words, how do Operations Division staff work between and among branches within the division and with staff from other divisions of the ministry.

Policy Task Force

The Policy Task Force is chaired by Judith Wright, Assistant Deputy Minister of Strategic Directions.

The task force is working on definitions of the various kinds of policy work undertaken by the ministry. It is now examining the necessary policy functions based on those definitions. As part of their work, task force members are also doing an inventory of policy projects currently under way in the ministry. In addition, they are reviewing policy processes in other large decentralized ministries of the government.

Cheryl O'Connor of the Restructuring Project Team is leading a functional analysis

of policy processes. Similar to the functional analysis being undertaken within the Operations Task Force, this activity will examine the specific processes involved in policy development.

Corporate Services Task Force

This task force is chaired by Lynn MacDonald, Assistant Deputy Minister of Corporate Services.

If you would like to have input to the work of the task force, you can contact task force members Cheryl Gorman, who works in the Corporate Services Division, or Casey Reedy of the Restructuring Project Team.

This task force is working to identify what is needed to achieve consistency, efficiency and accountability in the delivery of Human Resources, Information Systems, Finance, and Administration to internal and external clients.

Human Resources Task Force

This task force is led by Mary Kardos Burton, Director of the ministry's Human Resources Branch.

Members of this task force are collaborating with other task forces in the development of a detailed staff placement and redeployment plan. Lorraine Deska acts as liaison between the task force and the Human Resources Branch, which is working in support of this task force.

Other work taking place under this task force includes a review of the ministry's performance management practices, which is being coordinated by Annette Twist, Manager of Community Programs in the Waterloo Area Office. Alayne Bigwin, Manager of the ministry's Native Affairs Secretariat, is coordinating the development of recommendations on what options are available to provide developmental opportunities and new challenges to staff in a constraint environment.

Monica Aleya from the Southeast Region is leading the development of a redeployment plan to support the restructuring while Marcia Nelson of the Community Services Branch is examining the employment equity implications of the restructuring.

Control of costs announced

by Julia Naczynski

In the coming months, our ministry will be taking a number of steps as it participates in the government's Expenditure Control Plan as announced April 23rd.

Specifically, we'll be taking measures to control costs in the areas of social assistance, transfer payments and the ministry's own direct operating expenditures. Deputy Minister Rosemary Proctor said in an e-mail to staff on that same date.

The ministry's measures represent a significant contribution to the government's expenditure control plan — \$313.3 million

in 1993-94 — and these will have an impact on staff.

- The ministry will close Oxford Regional Centre in Woodstock by 1996/97. There are currently 244 clients and 522 staff at the centre. Each of the residents will be moved to community settings appropriate to their individual circumstances.

- By 1996/97, staff of the facility will be declared surplus and will be eligible for all entitlements.

- As a result of the movement of residents into the community and the downsizing of Oxford, 321 staff in ministry-operated

facilities will be affected this fiscal year.

- Ministry administration costs, excluding directly-operated facilities, will be reduced by 10 per cent over the next three years. The ministry will manage any increases in salaries and wages from within our existing budget. This constraint has substantial implications in MCSS. Taken together, these re-structuring and streamlining measures have the potential for a net reduction of 235 jobs across the ministry.

The ministry will make every effort to manage this reduction through normal attrition, the effective management of vacancies, and other strategies, said Rosemary.

No immediate surplus notices are being issued within MCSS. The ministry restructuring will continue according to the process already under way, and we will continue with the downsizing of facilities for people with developmental disabilities.

All Ontario government ministries are affected by the expenditure constraints, noted Rosemary. The total impact across the OPS involves approximately 3,800 positions.

"I know that these are uncertain times and I want to emphasize that I appreciate all your efforts in coping with the pressures that come with this process of fiscal constraint," said Rosemary.

Employment accommodation: you never know when you'll need it

If you're an able-bodied person who wouldn't normally consider yourself "a person with a disability," you might think that some ministry policies don't apply to you — policies like Accommodation in Employment for Persons with Disabilities.

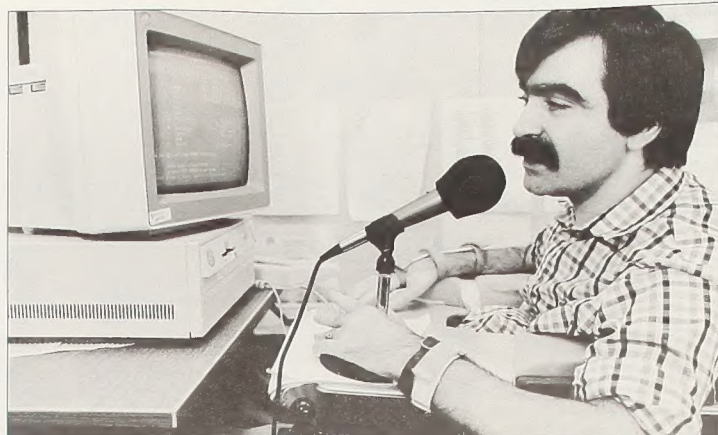
But you never know when they could apply to you.

You could break a leg...or experience an unexpected, debilitating illness...or undergo a medical procedure that results in a temporary disability.

If you wanted to get back to work, suddenly the employment accommodation policy would be of vital interest to you.

The policy applies, not just to people with ongoing disabilities, but also to people with temporary disabilities. (That's where your broken leg comes in.) It also applies to you whether you're classified or unclassified, and it applies to people who are seeking employment in the Ontario Public Service.

Employment accommodation can mean many things — human support services such as an attendant or sign-language interpreter, technical aids and devices such as a Telephone Device for the Deaf (TDD), workstation modification such as adjustable furniture and handrails; building modifications such as ramps, accessible washrooms and automatic doors; accessible transportation for employment-related activities that are outside the place where work is routinely performed; and modifications to employment policy and practices (such as



Tony Aquilino, a VRS counsellor with the Hamilton direct services office, has a workspace that meets his accommodation needs.

flexible or part-time hours).

Of course this is all part of the OPS Employment Equity Program, which aims to create an accessible and equitable workplace — one that's reflective of the people it serves.

The only catch to this is that accommodation is made only for "the

known employment needs of the individual." In other words, you have to inform your manager or supervisor that you need accommodation.

And managers, once they are made aware of the needs of the employee, are responsible for making sure these accommodation needs are met.

Funding and expert advice are available to assist managers and ensure they have appropriately accommodated job applicants and employees with disabilities.

For information and advice, call the Employment Equity Office at (416) 327-4816. The office is located on the 23rd floor of 2 Bloor St. W. in Toronto.

Volunteer and inmates help young people stay on the straight and narrow

MERVYN FIELD

THIS ATHLETIC FIELD IS NAMED FOR ROSS MERVYN CANADIAN HE CAME INTO OUR COUNTRY INTO OUR PRISON AND INTO OUR HEARTS HE TAUGHT US HOW TO RUN AND HE TAUGHT US ABOUT GIVING IN RETURN WE DEDICATE TO HIM THIS FIELD



a young person. The one-hour session was well attended by 32 probationers and two adults. Refreshments were provided by the Sault Ste. Marie and Algoma branch of the Probation Officers' Association of Ontario and the session was organized by probation officers. Staff from the Algoma Community Support Team, a counselling service for Phase I young offenders, also attended.

Comments received from the young people who attended showed that they found the session to be educational.

Ross Mervyn has been touring schools in northern Ontario with his video and has made this presentation in many schools, where it has been seen by a wide audience of young people — not just young offenders. One can only speculate how many young people may well have been deterred from negative behaviour after his presentation.

Ben Baldassarro
Probation Officer
Sault Ste. Marie

Ross Mervyn, a volunteer who organized a running program for inmates at a Michigan state prison (shown in photo) recently spoke with Phase I young offenders in Sault Ste. Marie.

A crime prevention seminar of a different sort was held by Sault Ste. Marie Probation Services for Phase I (12- to 15-year-old) young offenders recently.

The seminar, which was held at the local YMCA, was conducted by Ross Mervyn, a Canadian corrections volunteer who has been active in developing a fitness/running program for inmates at the Kinross Correctional Centre in Sault Ste. Marie, Michigan.

Over the years, Ross has developed a rapport with the inmates and with their co-operation he developed a video entitled *Do*

Your Own Time. The seminar was developed around the video, which shows inmates from Kinross, several of whom are serving life sentences for various crimes, talking about the mistakes they have made and urging young people to get help if they're making the same kind of mistakes, such as abusing alcohol or using drugs.

The video provides a poignant warning to young people that prison can be a cruel environment for those who end up there.

The inmates illustrate how a negative lifestyle involving substance abuse and a poor choice of friends can be destructive to

dialogue

Ontario Community and Social Services

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